

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus for safely evacuating a person from a multistory building by enabling the person to exit from the interior of the building to the outside very quickly and to descend to the ground or lower surface alongside the exterior of the building sufficiently slowly to land injury-free, the apparatus comprising a housing, a harness for affixing the housing to the person, a cable of predetermined length within the housing, having a free-end with a securing member for affixing it to an anchorage proximate the descent point, and having an energy dissipating mechanism within the housing driven by the payout of the cable as the person descends, having the characteristic that the slope of the rate of energy dissipated exceeds the slope of the rate of potential energy released as a function of descent speed at their point of intersection, and the characteristic that the intersection occurs at the sufficiently slow descent speed without the person's control.